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FOR PARENTS ONLY

By Nancy Cleaver

YOUR CHILD'S EYESIGHT

"If your child's eyesight was in danger how much would you spend to give his eyes every chance to return to normal?" "What really question," you exclaim, "I would get the very best professional eyecare available. I would spend whatever was necessary, borrow if I had to, in order that my child would not be handicapped by poor vision."

But does your child already show signs which should lead you to suspect that he does need attention for his eyes, especially in the preschool child, the condition of the eyes "crossing", drooping, rubbing the eyes, the "trick" of shutting out eye or squinting, or holding books or small objects very close to the eyes, stumbling or inability to catch a ball in a game may all be hints to a parent that something may be wrong with his child's eyes. If there is any doubt at all about this, a child should immediately be examined by an expert in eyes, and his suggestions should be followed to the letter. Semi-annual eye examinations would detect many minor faults and have serious harm to eye-sighting glasses corrective exercises or other treatments.

Occasionally a child's sight is threatened by an unexpected tragic accident when the sharp point of a pencil, pen, a stick, a penknife or scissors enters the eye. Blind points are essential safety first rules in a home with little children. Each year a few children have their eyes hurt in fireworks accidents, and this kind of carelessness on the part of adults in charge of minors is almost inexorable.

Most parents know that during measles, whooping cough, or diphtheria, a child's bed should be placed

or stooping, or lying in a prone position with the eyes much too close to the book or object attracting attention. Concentrating for longer than half an hour without resting the eyes and working or playing in a poor light are also disastrous to good eyesight.

Parents who realize that a child suffers discomforts, headaches, slow learning, unhappiness and possibly a permanent handicap if eyes are not properly protected from strain will do all they can to save their children's eyesight by insisting on proper posture and correct lighting. Even little tots should not form the habit of keeping their eyes fixed at a distance closer than a foot. A longer distance about 17 inches between the eyes and the book should be observed by older children. Because of faulty posture, shortsightedness (myopia) increases from a small percent of children who enter kindergarten at five years to about 30 percent of boys and girls starting high school. A child should form the habit in early years of sitting upright in a small properly designed chair when he wants to read. A child's eyesight is beyond price—no trouble should be too great to safeguard and preserve it for adult use!

FIRST ON THE AGENDA

Right after the coming session of Parliament opens on January 26, legislation leading to the union of Newfoundland and Canada will be given top priority. It is learned here, because apparently there is anxiety that procedures should be completed in time for the scheduled entry of Newfoundland into Confederation.



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